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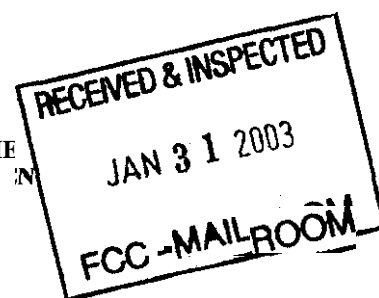
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January 29, 2003

Honorable. Michael Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Ex-Parte Filing

**RE: Verizon of District of Columbia, Maryland, and
West Virginia's Application to Offer Long-
Distance Service to their area consumers.
WC Docket # 02-384**

Dear Chairman Powell:

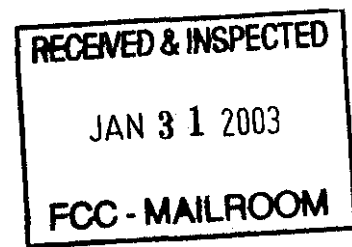
On behalf of the National Association of Commission for Women (NACW), I am writing to you in support of Verizon District of Columbia, Maryland and West Virginia's application to offer long-distance services in the District of Columbia, Maryland and West Virginia (DC, MD, & WV). Passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 was the result of exhaustive debate and the conclusion by the U.S. Congress that the public interest is best served by open competition between aggressive competitors able to provide comparable packages of services. In the spirit of competition, the NACW believes that the Verizon application filing meets this test; Verizon's offering in DC, MD, & WV will lead to competition over who can provide the greatest value, the most convenience and the best quality of services to the DC, MD, & WV consumers.

The DC, MD, & WV's long-distance offering will benefit consumers by providing:

- **Lower Prices:** This means that consumers will enjoy a choice of competitive rates for local and long-distance telephones services.
- **More Choice:** Outdated government regulations prevent consumers from receiving the full array of options that could be available. Verizon DC, MD, & WV's application will allow consumers to buy long-distance services from the companies that offer the best service at competitive prices. The bottom line is that the DC, MD, & WV consumers will now be able to choose "a phone plan that works for them"

Jan 31 2003

Honorable Michael Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
January 30, 2003
Page 2.



- One-Stop Shopping: Consumers are tired of dealing with several different companies to get all of the services they want. With the approval of Verizon's application, consumers who wish to get their local and long-distance services all from one company and will be able to enjoy the convenience of "one-stop shopping." Of course, consumers in the DC, MD, & WV area will still have the option of purchasing services separately.

In the spirit of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, to bring about lower prices, more choice and one-stop shopping, we urge the speedy approval of Verizon DC, MD, & WV's long-distance application.

The NACW is a national non-profit organization representing the socio-economic interest of women, and the DC, MD, & WV Commissions on Women are part of its member organization. One of our goals is to ensure the availability and access of competitively priced and affordable utility services for women consumers nationwide. In this regard, the Verizon DC, MD, & WV application, is a win-win for the DC, MD, & WV consumers and ratepayers, alike for long-distance telephone service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary J. Watkins".

Mary J. Watkins
President